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This Week in Bridge

(425) Using NT Bids in 2/1 GF Auctions

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Level: 7 of 10 (3 of 6)

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General

One of the most powerful parts of being in a 2/1 GF auction is that all rebids below game are forcing. That means that we can use all our NT rebids by either the Opener or Responder to describe our hand without fear of being passed. This dramatically increases the usefulness of a 2NT rebid, since it would be non-forcing if we were not in a game forcing auction. Knowing that 2NT is a forcing bid in these auctions allows us to give further definition to our other NT rebids, like a jump to 3NT. Here we will look at how both the Opener and Responder can effectively use 2NT rebids to preserve space and allow for auctions that best describe our hands. Let's see how these bids can help with reaching the best game as well as exploring slam.

NT Rebids by the Opener

In a 2/1 GF auction the opening bidder's NT rebid options are 2NT, 3NT, or even 4NT. In general, we use these NT rebids to describe hands that have stoppers in the unbid suits and are interested in playing in NT. Let's look at each of these rebids in detail.

2NT Rebids by Opener

When we open the bidding with one suit and partner makes a 2/1 GF bid then there are two unbid suits. If we rebid 2NT then we usually show a balanced hand with stoppers in both the unbid suits.

Example 1

♠ A9843

♥ K5

♦ Q84

♣ KJ5

1♠ 2♦

___?

With a balanced 12-14 points, stoppers in both ♥ and ♣ (the unbid suits), we rebid 2NT.

With a balanced minimum hand with no stopper in one of the unbid suits, we can rebid our 5-card Major suit as "2-Major Waiting".



Example 2

♠ AKJ43

♥ KQ5

♦ K84

♣ Q5

1♠ 2♣

___?

With a balanced 18-19 points and stoppers in both ♥ and ♦ (the unbid suits), we rebid 2NT and then the auction might proceed:

1♠ 2♣

2NT 3NT

4NT

This 4NT bid is quantitative, showing this big balanced hand, and allowing partner to decide what to do next.

Example 3

♠ KJ5

♥ AQ93

♦ KT98

♣ 74

1♦ 2♣

___?

Here we rebid 2NT with a balanced hand, showing stoppers in both Majors. If we had a stopper in only one of the Majors, we would bid that Major, implying a problem in the other Major suit.

3NT Rebids by Opener

In a 2/1 GF auction a jump to 3NT by Opener (on their first rebid) shows extra values. The Principle of Fast Arrival does not apply to NT rebids. These rebids show about 15-17 HCP with stoppers in both the unbid suits. Because Opener did not start with 1NT, we know this is a semi-balanced hand or one with a singleton in partner's suit.

Example 4

♠ AQ4

♥ KQ954

♦ K

♣ Q643

1♥ 2♦

___?

Here we rebid 3NT to describe our entire hand with our rebid. Notice that the 4-card side suit was not a strong one. With more of our honors in our ♣ suit, we would rebid 3♣.



4NT Rebid by Opener

A rebid of 4NT by the Opener is generally treated as Keycard in partner's suit.

Example 5

♠ AKQ54

♥ Q943

♦ A8

♣ A5

1♠ 2♥

___?

Here we rebid 4NT as Keycard in ♥. This agrees to partner's suit and is heading towards slam.

If Responder game forces into 2-minor, then many partnerships play *Minorwood*, using 4-minor as Keycard. In that case, a jump to 4NT is quantitative, showing a balanced 18-19 points with a stopper in both unbid suits.

NT Rebids by the Responder

In a 2/1 GF auction, Responder can use a rebid of 2NT on the second round of the bidding to deny a fit for Opener's suit (or suits) and stoppers in all the unbid suits.

2NT Rebids by Responder

When Responder bids 2NT on the second round of the bidding they show a stopper in the unbid suits without promising extra values.

Example 6

♠ Q9

♥ AQ8

♦ 943

♣ AJ986

1♠ 2♣

2♦ ___?

Here Responder rebids 2NT to show a stopper in ♥ and no ♠ or ♦ fit. If Opener raises to 3NT, Responder will pass. If Opener rebids 3♠, showing a 6-card ♠ suit, the Responder can raise to 4♠.



Example 7

♠ AQ
♥ AQ8
♦ Q43
♣ AT986
1♠ 2♣
2♦ 2NT
3♦ __?

Here, Responder uses a 2NT rebid with a large hand. This preserves bidding space and allows the Opener room to “pattern out”. After a 3♦/3♣ rebid Responder can then drive the auction beyond 3NT.

3NT Rebids by Responder

With Fast Arrival not applying to NT bids, a jump to 3NT shows extra values.

Example 8

♠ K
♥ AJT8
♦ KQT84
♣ KT8
1♠ 2♦
2♠ __?

Here Responder rebids 3NT to show extra values and stopper in the unbid suits.

4NT Rebids by Responder

A 4NT rebid by Responder is quantitative if Opener’s previous bid was NT. But if it was a suit then it is Keycard.

Example 9

1♠ 2♦
2♥ 4NT

This 4NT bid is Keycard in ♥!

Conclusion

Some of the most useful bids in a 2/1 GF auction are NT rebids. These rebids set the stage for showing values, finding a 3NT contract, and playing it from the right side. Make sure that you discuss these auctions and the follow-up bidding with your regular partners. Making use of these bids will dramatically improve your constructive bidding!